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Political Rhetorics in the Anti-Ottoman Literature.
Martinus Thyrnavinus: *To the Dignitaries
of the Hungarian Kingdom*

“For what is the sense of knowledge and
extensive reading, by the immortal gods, if
you cannot talk as eloquently as it is fitting?”¹

The first longer epic poem calling for anti-Ottoman struggle by a Hungarian author was published in 1523,² paving the way to lengthier and more extensive compositions of the 16th and 17th century, such as *Bellum Pannonicum* by Christian Schesaeus, *Monomachiae* by Nicolaus Gabelman, or the *Obsidio Szigethiana* by Miklós Zrínyi. The Ottoman army had been standing at the Southern frontiers of Hungary for 150 years, and the fights were recounted in epic chronicles in Hungarian as *The Siege of Šabac*, or in stories recording – and embellishing – certain adventures, like those of Szilágyi and Hagymási.³ Nonetheless, the European Humanist ideology of the struggle against the Ottomans was put in an epic contextual frame by Martinus Thyrnavinus (Márton of Trnava, or Martin of Nagyszombat, in Hungarian), a poet of limited talent who had an intellectual background which had Humanistic and Medieval traits at the same time.

The appearance of the Ottomans on the borderlands of Europe had met with strong literary-rhetoric reactions as early as the end of the 14th century. The Herodotian typology of the perpetual conflict between Europe and Asia was reawakened by Petrarch, who, in a song on one of the last crusades, refers to the Greco-Persian War: “Recall the mad audacity of Xerxes / [...] / and how the sea ran red at Salamis. / [...] / And yet not only this, a dire distress / for those unhappy races from the East, / promises victory, / but Marathon, and that important strait / the lion king defended with so few, / and other battles you have read about.” The fight is pre-

- 1 Dialogus mythologicus Bartolomei Coloniensis, dulcibus iocis, iucundis salsibus, concinnisque sententiis refertus. Ed. by Adrianus WOLPHARDUS. Vienna 1512, 1v.
- 2 NAGYSZOMBATI, Márton: Opusculum ad regni Hungariae proceres. In: *Analecta nova ad historiam renascentium in Hungaria litterarum spectantia*. Ed. by Jenő ÁBEL and István HEGEDŰS. Budapest 1903, 217–270. The text was originally published by Johann Singrenius in Vienna in 1523.
- 3 For a critical edition and linguistic analysis of the *Siege of Šabac*, see IMRE, Samu: *A Szabács viadala*. Budapest 1958. There is no modern critical edition of the History of Mihály Szilágyi and László Hagymási (written in 1561, but surely relying on earlier, perhaps oral versions of the story); for the text see *A 16. század magyar nyelvű világi irodalma* [Hungarian secular literature in the 16th century]. Ed. by József JANKOVICS, Péter KÖSZEGHY and Géza SZENTMÁRTON SZABÓ. Budapest 2000, 318–321.

sented as the struggle between *civilitas* and barbarism: “We should soon find out / the worth of Turks, and Arabs, [...] / unarmoured, timorous, and lazy people, / not fighting hand to hand, / but merely sending missiles on the wind.”⁴ Philip VI (reg. 1328–1350), King of France, on the other hand, is presented as “our new Charlemagne / the vengeance it were sinful to delay / and Europe long has longed to venture on. / Our Lord is coming to secure His Bride! / And as the word goes out / Babylon trembles and is stupefied.”⁵ The scheme of the struggle between the civilised Christianity of Europe and barbarism is of utmost importance for Humanist literature, and there are only a few who dare to step over its limits.

What helped to develop the simple conflict between barbarian and civilised into a larger system was Aristotle’s *Politics*, which became widely available for readers of the evolving humanism in the fresh translation of Leonardo Bruni in the beginning of the 15th century: “Those who live in cold countries, as the north of Europe, are full of courage, but wanting in understanding and the arts: therefore they are very tenacious of their liberty; but, not being politicians, they cannot reduce their neighbours under their power: but the Asians, whose understandings are quick, and who are conversant in the arts, are deficient in courage; and therefore are always conquered and the slaves of others: but the Grecians, placed as it were between these two boundaries, so partake of them both as to be at the same time both courageous and sensible.”⁶ Thus, the Western Christian world (which, after the end of Byzantium, comes to equal Europe) is also the protector of the freedom of humanity, unlike Asia, where – to use one of the favourite observations of Humanists –, apart from the ruler, everybody is a slave. The greatest danger that threatens freedom is freedom itself, that is, infighting and intrigue against each other, which the Humanists describe as *discordia* as opposed to the keyword used for the desired unity of European states, *concordia*. There are states that uphold and preserve this desired and imagined unity, which, since the 15th century, has been more often called Europe rather than *orbis Christianus*, the community of Christian states.⁷ They are the ones who deserve the title of Christianity’s support, shield and bulwark (*murus/clipeus Christianitatis*) in Humanist terminology.⁸

4 Song 28: “O aspectata in ciel beata et bella”. See PETRARCA, Francesco: Canzoniere. Transl. by J. G. NICHOLS. Manchester 2000, 27 f.

5 Ibid., 26 f. On the medieval antecedents, see SOUTHERN, R. W.: Western Views of Islam in the Middle Ages. Cambridge/Mass. 1962. – FLORI, Jean: La guerre sainte. La formation de l’idée de croisade dans l’Occident chrétien. Paris 2001.

6 ARISTOTLE: A Treatise on Government. Transl. by William ELLIS. New York 1912, 1327b.

7 HAY, Denys: Europe. The emergence of an idea. New York 1966, 100–111. – KOSELLECK, Reinhart: Zur historisch-politischen Semantik asymmetrischer Gegenbegriffe. In: IDEM: Vergangene Zukunft. Zur Semantik geschichtlicher Zeiten. Frankfurt/Main 1979, 65–104.

8 TERBE, Lajos: Egy európai szállóige életrajza (Magyarország a kereszténység védőbástyája) [The Biography of an European Adage (Hungary the Bulwark of Christianity)]. In: Egyetemes Philológiai Közlöny 60 (1936), 307–346. – HOPP, Lajos: Az “antemurale” és “conformitas” humanista eszméje a magyar-lengyel hagyományban [The Humanist Ideas of “Antemurale” and “Conformitas” in the Hungarian-Polish Tradition]. Budapest 1992, 23–62. – FODOR, Pál: The View of the Turk in Hungary. The Apocalyptic Tradition and the legend of the Red Apple in Ottoman-Hungarian Context. In: IDEM: In Quest of the Golden Apple. Imperial Ideology, Politics and Military Administration in the Ottoman Empire. Istanbul 2000, 71–103.

In Hungary, it was János (John) Vitéz (1408–1472) who first elaborated on these thoughts: “If I remember well, it has been almost a hundred years since the enemy weapons of the Turk, dangerous to God and man alike, and after making a short time of conquering Greece, the Kingdoms of Macedonia and Bulgaria, and then Albania, and bringing devastation to many many lands, they held the subdued in haughty derision, ruins and mourning, they pushed them in servitude, deprived them of their religion, forced upon them an alien belief, foreign morals, strange laws and the language of unbelievers. They did not leave anything untouched – neither saint, nor profane, nothing, I repeat, nothing was left untouched which could be harmed by sword, threats, fire or servitude: they desecrated everything wherever they went.”⁹ Hungary is the bulwark of the unified, Christian Europe (which, as it was mentioned above, was a Humanist invention), as there are people there who “are not temporarily, but permanently armed against our eternal enemies, who will never be reconciled with the Christian name. We wish that the support come, so that when our aim is fulfilled, the liberated Europe, having regained its faith, shall apostolate the glory and splendour of the Holy See.”¹⁰

To this Humanist treasure of *topoi*, the thought of divine punishment is added: it is already mentioned several times by János Vitéz that the failure of the anti-Ottoman wars must have been caused by the will of God: “We do believe that mortals have to see with a fearful soul the mysterious judgement of God in all these events – as it is only his overwhelming mercy that can preserve us, who can not reach the truth and prove ourselves to be weak when it comes to excellence,”¹¹ and even after the lost battle of Kosovo Polje (1389), apart from bad luck, “in everything else we worship and praise the scourge of God, and not that of men.”¹² After the lost battle of Varna, like many of his contemporaries, he comes to the conclusion that the failure was a divine punishment because the Hungarians had broken the peace treaty of Szeged (“it is only because of our sins that the barbarians remained stronger”);¹³ nonetheless, he never sees the reason for punishment in the utter moral failure of Hungarians or Christianity, as this would contradict his rhetorical objective, the call for help.

The Ottomans, who became the scourge of God because of the debauchery of Hungarians, only appear in the writings of the other adversary, Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini, the secretary of Emperor Frederick III, later Pope Pius II (1458–1464), who did not go out of his way to provide assistance. In 1445, Aeneas Silvius welcomed Ladislas V (the Posthumous) and the Hungarian delegation arriving in Vienna to demand the return of St Stephen’s crown, with a speech that claimed that

9 VITÉZ DE ZREDNA, Joannes: *Opera quae supersunt*. Ed. by Iván BORONKAI. Budapest 1980, 90 f. He wrote these words for the first time in September 1448 to Pope Nicholas V, but repeated them literally in his ambassadorial oration for the Imperial assembly in Frankfurt in 1454, see *ibid.*, 252 f. Furthermore, see BORONKAI, Iván: *Die Rede von Johannes Vitéz am Frankfurter Reichstag (1454)*. In: *Acta classica Universitatis scientiarum Debreceniensis* 10/11 (1974/75), 183–188.

10 VITÉZ DE ZREDNA (cf. n. 9), 92.

11 *Ibid.*, 177 f.

12 *Ibid.*, 97.

13 *Ibid.*, 44: “Iudicii divini plagam retulimus, nostrisque peccatis barbari tunc mansere forciores.”

the Ottoman devastation of Hungary is a divine punishment for the internal struggles of the country, and only accepting the child king can save them from retribution.¹⁴ Following the fall of Constantinople (1453), however, Aeneas Silvius, in an unfinished dialogue, applies the thought of divine punishment not to Hungarians, but to the Greek: in a dream, he meets the famous preacher, San Bernardino, who leads him to the Elysean fields where he can listen to the dialogue of the last Greek Emperor, Constantine XI and Jesus Christ about the reasons for the fall of the city. To the question of Constantine, posed in the manner of Catilina-Cicero (“But how long will You allow the Turks to abuse Your patience?”) and to his parallel to the fate of the Jews (“God, when angry, punished them as well, but then he gave them his mercy”), Jesus replies that the successes of the Ottomans had been preordained, they brought deserved retribution upon the errant Christians, as never before had so much sin covered Christian cities, there never had been so much avarice, lust and cruelty.¹⁵ Piccolomini does not see the reason for divine punishment in one event, but he extends it to the decay of a whole nation.

The thought of divine punishment also appears in the work of Janus Pannonius (1434–1472), the most important Hungarian Humanist poet, in the elegy *On the Flood* (*De inundatione*) written in autumn of 1468,¹⁶ but there the punishment which Hungarians suffer for the sins of the whole of Christianity is the flood itself. The motif of the Ottomans as a scourge of God to punish Hungarians for their sins only evolves following the Reformation and Mohács to its fullness.¹⁷ We do not meet the Ottomans too often in Janus Pannonius’ extensive oeuvre, although other contemporary Humanists often addressed the question in their work outside Hungary. Aeneas Silvius, during his papacy as Pius II, attempted to convert the Ottoman Empire to Christianity in a long letter addressed to Mehmed II (reg. 1444–1446, 1451–1481); Laudivio Zacchia wrote fictitious Humanist letters in the name of the Ottoman Emperor as school practice (which were very popular both in manuscript and printed form in the 15th century); and almost every first-rate Humanist wrote orations on the importance of the anti-Ottoman wars, usually employing the stand-

14 SZÖRÉNYI, László: Panegyricus és eposz (Zrínyi és Cortesius) [Panegyric and Epic Poem (Zrínyi and Cortesius)]. In: IDEM: Hunok és jezsuiták. Budapest 1993, 25–33, here 30 f.

15 HANKINS, James: Renaissance Crusaders. Humanist Crusade Literature in the Age of Mehmed II. In: *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 49 (1995), 111–207, here 134.

16 PANNONIUS, Janus: Összes munkái [Complete works]. Ed. by Sándor V. Kovács. Budapest 1987, 374, vers. 91–100: “Quid tamen o Superi? nosne haec tantummodo clades / Tot petit e populis [...] Si pereunt omnes, nec nos superesse rogamus, / Aeque animo quivis publica fata subit. / Sin soli luimus communia crimina Chuni / Humanum nobis dulce piare genus.”

17 See BOHNSTEDT, John W.: The Infidel Scourge of God. The Turkish Menace as Seen by German Pamphleteers of the Reformation Era. In: *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 58/9 (1968), 1–58. Surveys of the Hungarian texts ŐZE, Sándor: “Bűneiért bünteti Isten a magyar népet”. Egy 16. századi toposz vizsgálata a nyomtatott egyházi irodalomban [“God Punished the Hungarian Nation for its Sins”. The Analysis of a 16th Century Topos in the Printed Ecclesiastical Literature]. Budapest 1991, 80–141. – DOBROVITS, Mihály/ŐZE, Sándor: Pázmány Korán-cáfolatának előzményei. A török XVI. századi magyarországi megítélése [The Forerunners of Pázmány’s Refutation of the Qu’ran. The Image of the Turk in 16th century Hungary]. In: Pázmány Péter és kora. Ed. by Emil HARGITTAY. Piliscsaba 2001, 62–70.

ard commonplace arguments. There were even a few who wrote laudatory epic poems in Latin to the Sultan.¹⁸

Taking all these into account, there were relatively few Humanist works on the subject of the Ottomans written in Hungary. Janus Pannonius, the most important poet of the Renaissance Humanism in Hungary did mention the wild, barbaric Turks as the reason for having to go to war in some of his poems,¹⁹ but he employs Humanist rhetoric in a detailed manner in one poetic epistle only.²⁰ This was also written in the name of King Matthias, as a response to a similar Italian poem: Janus remained the poet of peace, and he rather considered the Ultramontane-Northern existence as real barbarism, not the Turks.²¹ The fashionable anti-Ottoman spirit of his age imbues his work at one point: in the application of antique Greek orations to contemporary historical events. In his translation of one of Demosthenes' orations against Philippos, he thus introduces his translation: "As Philippos charged the Athenians with accusations and declared war, Demosthenes wanted to convince them not to wage war because it is necessary, but they should rather face the danger and thus prove that it is possible to defeat Macedonia. I translated this oration primarily because I found that it is very fitting to the present situation of Christians in the fight against the Ottomans."²² Many Humanists of the age have similar motives when they translate or rewrite various Greek orations to Latin; Cardinal Bessarion for instance, translates Demosthenes' *First Olynthiac* to illustrate the parallel nature of the two situations: "As Philippos used to threaten Greece, thus the Ottoman threatens now Italy. This is why Philippos plays the role of the Ottomans, and the Italians that of Athens: you will immediately see that the oration as a whole fits the situation well."²³ Using imitational allusions, János Vitéz also compares the Ottoman wars to Antique Christian-pagan conflicts when he takes over whole sentences from the church history of the late Antique Rufinus of Aquileia.²⁴ Later, between

- 18 *Epistola ad Mahumetem; Epistolae Magni Turci*; among them a letter of the Sultan to the Amazons; the works of Fr. Filelfo, Bessarion, Ficino and G. Trapezuntios; the *Amyris* of Gian Maria Filelfo, which has however been rewritten and re-addressed to Francesco Sforza, Duke of Milan by the author. Generally see PERTUSI, Agostino: I primi studi in occidente sull'origine e la potenza dei Turchi. In: Studi Veneziani 12 (1970), 465–552. More recently BISAHA, Nancy: "New Barbarian" or Worthy Adversary? Humanist Constructs of the Ottoman Turks in 15th Century Italy. In: Western Views of Islam in Medieval and Early Modern Europe, Perception of Other. Ed. by Michael FRASSETTO and David R. BLANKS. London 1999, 185–205 and EADEM: Creating East and West: Renaissance humanists and the Ottoman Turks. Philadelphia 2004, 43–93.
- 19 E.g.: *De se aegrotante in castris* [When he fell ill in the camp]; *Comprecatio Deorum pro rege Matthia in Turcos bellum parante* [Prayer to the Gods for King Matthias going to war against the Turks]; *De Pio Pontifice Maximo, qui obiit expeditione contra Turcos* [On the death of Pope Pius II during the preparation for war]. See all in modern Latin-Hungarian bilingual edition in PANNONIUS (cf. n. 16).
- 20 Matthias rex Hungarorum Antonio Constantio poetae Italo [King Matthias to the Italian Poet Antonio Constanzi]. See *ibid.*
- 21 "[...] externi barbara turba sumus"; "we foreigners, we are but a barbarian mob"; *Ad Tribrachum poetam* [To Gaspar Tribachus]. See *ibid.*
- 22 *Ibid.*, 582.
- 23 HANKINS (cf. n. 15), 116.
- 24 BORONKAI, Iván: Vitéz János és Aquileiai Rufinus [János Vitéz and Rufinus of Aquileia]. In:

1507 and 1510 Mihály Kesserű (Michael Chessarius), bishop of Bosnia, translates two speeches by Isocrates on government (*To Nicocles*) and on autarchy and the subservience of subjects (*Symmachikos*) for King Vladislav II.

We can find a few anti-Ottoman poems in the modest poetic output of the generation following Janus; however, no major epic composition was born. The flexibility of the Humanist patterns is shown by László Vetési's epigram written between 1469 and 1472,²⁵ in which the Ottomans appear as the contemporary equivalent of the Punic threat to Rome. On the other hand, in the poetic epistle written by Janus in the name of King Matthias to Antonio Costanzi in 1464, it is Matthias himself who appears as a Carthaginian: the tenacity of his fight against the Ottomans is comparable to the resolve of Hannibal against the Romans.²⁶ Naturally, diplomatic orations also carried many Humanist turns of phrase; surviving examples after János Vitéz include György Polycarpus-Kosztolányi's oration at the 1461 Imperial Assembly at Nuremberg, Janus Pannonius' oration in front of Pope Paul II in 1464, and an oration from László Vetési during his embassy to Rome in 1475. However, in these orations the nature of the content required by the political situation is much stronger than rhetoric quality.

Italian poets, however, have compensated for what the Hungarians had missed: this is how Alessandro Cortese's panegyric to King Matthias followed and adapted some motifs from Antonio Costanzi's poem, which had also inspired an answer from Janus Pannonius. Cortese's poem celebrates the Hungarian king as the hero saving Europe from the Ottoman menace; this is also how Matthias was addressed in the letters of Marsilio Ficino and described in an oration written upon his death by Giovanni Garzone in Bologna. His virtues, that is, righteousness, compliance, wisdom, valour and Christian belief are constantly present in every work, and the same constancy is characteristic to the barbaric Turks, who, according to Cortese, are led by Alecto, the fury from Hell. Humanists associated with Matthias' court took over his official propaganda, and there were very few independent voices.

Among the few independent voices, the diary of Konstantin from Ostrovica, also called the "Polish janissary" is especially interesting. The soldier, who was originally of Serbian origin, became a janissary after the fall of Constantinople, and then entered Hungarian service after Matthias had recaptured Jajce in 1463. He later retired to Poland, and this is where he wrote his reminiscences in a mixture of Polish and Serbian, in which he relates the story of his life, tells a number of Islamic legends and gives an impressive picture of the internal affairs and relations of the Ottoman army. He had the identity of a real frontier soldier: he liked all the rulers he had served (Gregory, despot of Smederevo, Sultan Murad and King Matthias), but he hated all his former adversaries, including János Hunyadi, whom he blames for the losses at Varna and Kosovo Polje. Following the recapture of Jajce and his switch to the Hungarian side he writes that he was happy to have been a Christian

Irodalomtörténeti Közlemények 94 (1990), 213–217.

25 RITOÓKNÉ SZALAY, Ágnes: "Nympha super ripam Danubii". Budapest 2002, 118.

26 PANNONIUS (cf. n. 16), vers. 103.

again and “stay in the service of Matthias together with the other Ottomans,” after all, despite his Serbian origin, he was a Turk in Hungarian eyes due to the war.²⁷

The only other author who displays a similar independent viewpoint and an appreciation – albeit mixed with an apprehension to what the future might bring – of the internal order of the Ottomans is Georgius de Hungaria, a native of Mühlbach (Hung. Szászsebes, now Sebeș in Romania) in Transylvania, who was kidnapped by mercenaries in 1438, then sold into slavery, and thus spent twenty years in various parts of the Ottoman Empire. Georgius, who lived as a monk in Rome after regaining his freedom, in his *Treatise on the Morals, Conditions and Perfidy of the Turks*, which he wrote in Rome (the first edition was published around 1480), praises the constancy of their faith, their cleanliness, the avoidance of worshipping images, and the paradoxical fact that while all Muslims are led by the devil, they always show unity (the desired *concordia* of Christians) in their intentions, the deepest diabolic reason for which is that they do not believe in goodness and thus they are obstinate in holding on to the devil.²⁸ The devil, naturally, does not sit inactively in their soul, but prepares the Apocalypse, which, as illustrated by the quotations from medieval apocalyptic philosopher Joachim of Fiore, is very close indeed. This eschatological line of thought in Georgius’ work show a parallel nature to *Tractatus de Turcis*, a treatise on the Ottomans most likely written by Dominicans in 1473/74 (published in Nuremberg in 1484), which also sees the end of the world and the coming of the Antichrist in the Ottomans.²⁹ However, this thought will reach a prominent place only in the era of the Reformation which followed the period this article deals with; as we have seen, Humanist poets are quite content with Alecto and the furies instead of Antichrist, even though they cannot bring about the Apocalypse.

Humanists in Hungary, left without a patron after the death of Matthias, felt the lack of a strong, rich ruler and patron just as strongly as the country as a whole. The distance between the king and Humanist poets lessened, and Bohuslav Hassenštejn a Lobkowitz, who was not only a Baron and thus a frequent visitor of the royal court in Buda between 1499 and 1503, but also an eminent poet, often addressed and reprimanded the ruler as a friend (for instance, in his consolatory poem on the occasion of the death of Queen Anna).³⁰ During the rule of Matthias, it would have been hardly possible to write three epigrams on the royal toothache, as Bohuslav

27 MIHAILOVIĆ, Konstantin: Pamiętniki Janczara czyli Kronika turecka Konstantego z Ostrowicy napisana migdzy r. 1496 a 1501 [Memoirs of a Janissary, or the Turkish chronicle of Constantine of Ostrowica, written between 1496 and 1501]. Ed. by Jan Łoś. Cracow 1912. For an English translation, see MIHAILOVIĆ, Konstantin: Memoirs of a janissary. Transl. by Benjamin STOLZ. Ann Arbor 1975.

28 HUNGARIA, Georgius de: *Tractatus de moribus conditionibus et nequicia Turcorum*. Ed. by Reinhard KLOCKOW. Köln 1994, 214.

29 *Tractatus quidam de Turcis*. Prout ad praesens ecclesia sancta ab eis affligitur, collecti a quibusdam fratribus OP. Nürnberg 1481.

30 LOBKOWITZ VON HASSENSTEIN, Bohuslaw: *Opera poetica*. Ed. by Marta VACULÍNOVÁ. München-Leipzig 2006, 126–132, Elegia consolatoria ad Wladislaum Pannoniae et Bohemiae regem, de morte uxoris Annae, or in his *Ad regem Wladislaum*, *ibid.*, 71: Turcarum veniunt acies cunctisque minantur / Christigenis et tu, Wladislae taces.

did, dedicating them to Vladislav II.³¹ There was no lack of symbolic representation on celebratory occasions: after the proclamation of the great 1501 anti-Ottoman alliance in Buda, they burned Mohammed's coffin, which had been hanging on a rope above the Danube, and they placed a statue of an angel, sprouting wine from its mouth among the joyous crowd, in front of the Papal Legate;³² however, there was no movement on the battlefield. The poets' complaints against the confused and anarchic state of public affairs became a general pattern; Hieronymus Balbus complained in a poem about having been robbed in a Hungarian forest, and Bohuslav gave a picturesque description of the profligacy and depraved life of Czech and Hungarian nobles in his *Satyra*.³³ In the dedication of *About the Administration of the Republic* (*De reipublicae administratione*, 1520) to Elek Thurzó, Valentinus Eck lamented a lot over the lack of public safety, the orphans being robbed all around the country, and – as many others in the epoch – quoted the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid (I, 150): “[F]rom earth, / With slaughter soaked, Justice, virgin divine, / The last of the immortals, fled away.”³⁴ In another of Eck's poems, addressed to King Louis II (reg. 1516/1522–1526), with a content similar to Nagyszombati's *About the War against the Turks* (*De bello Turcis inferendo*, 1524), the impersonated Mother Church complains about the sins spread all over the country and finds hope for the expulsion of the Turks in international co-operation.³⁵

Almost all Humanist works with a public theme point out the importance of concord (*concordia*) and plead for the expulsion of the Turks. A splendid example for this is offered by the epistle *About Concord* (*De concordia*), written by Celio Calcagnini, an Italian Humanist living in Eger, at the court of Ippolito d'Este and Bishop László Szalkay.³⁶ According to Valentinus Eck, those were the most fortunate who had died before the impending doom, such as János Thurzó, his patron's brother. In the same vein, the already deceased Tamás Bakócz and Imre Perényi are presented as the lucky ones by Márton Nagyszombati (III, 337–340). The idea of a divine punishment afflicted upon Hungarians also became widespread among the Humanists, and it also appears in the poem of Márton Nagyszombati, addressed to the notables of the Kingdom of Hungary. Nevertheless, contrary to the concept later introduced by the Reformation, divine punishment does not yet take the form of the devastation by the Turks, but rather appears as pestilence, famine, and natural disasters visiting the country (III, 91–102).

Márton Nagyszombati, as Rabán Gerézdi has shown, must have published his exhortative poem to the nobility of Hungary (*Opusculum ad procures Hungariae*)

31 Ibid., 223 f.

32 KOSÁRY, Domokos: Magyar külpolitika Mohács előtt [Hungarian Foreign Policy before Mohács]. Budapest 1979, 90.

33 HASENSTEYNIUS A LOBKOWITZ, Bohuslaus: Farrago poematum. Ed. by Thomas MITIS. Prague 1570, 322–326 (Balbus' poem) and IDEM (cf. n. 30), 23–30.

34 OVID: *Metamorphoses*. Transl. by A. D. MELVILLE. Oxford 1998, 5. For Eck's dialogue, see ECK, Valentinus: *De reipublicae administratione dialogus*. Ed. by D. ŠKOVIERA. Trnava 2006.

35 IDEM: *Ad Ludovicum Hungariae et Bohemiae Regem pro bello Turcis inferendo*. Cracow 1524. About Valentinus Eck and his poem, see GLOMSKI, Jacqueline: *Patronage and Humanist Literature in the Age of the Jagiellons*. Toronto 2007, 157–159.

36 CALCAGNINI, Celio: *Epistolarum criticarum et familiarium libri XVI*. Amberg 1608, 409–415.

in the autumn of 1523, as one of his readers, a certain Magister Melchior Eisenhart from Vienna wrote his name into his own copy already on 23rd November 1523.³⁷ Its author, a Benedictine friar, was mentioned for the first time in the documents in 1505 as an elected Prior. In 1507, he was a Prior at Pannonhalma, the Abbot of Szerencs in 1508, and was enrolled to the University of Cracow holding this dignity in 1514. His studies in Poland are also commemorated in his poem: when describing the lands around Hungary, only the Poles are accorded the title “doctus” (III, 515). Later on, he became Abbot of Tata and studied law in Vienna in the first half of 1516. During this time, he was probably close to the Esztergom court of Archbishop Tamás Bakócz, because – as it was shown by Ágnes Ritoókné Szalay – a short poem of his appears in the personal copy of *Breviarum* held by Tamás Bakócz. He also included a 64-verse laudatory poem about Bakócz in his collection of orations published after the Vienna conference of 1515.³⁸ According to Rabán Gerézdi, it is not impossible that Nagyszombati could have been at the universities of Cracow and Vienna earlier, in 1506 and 1511, respectively.³⁹ The publication of his poem *To the Dignitaries of the Kingdom of Hungary* was completed by two other works: a dedication to László Szalkay, Bishop of Eger, who most probably delivered the piece personally to the Singrenius publishing house in Vienna; and another one, an epigram, to Ulrich Fabri, temporary teacher of rhetoric at the University of Vienna, and a member of the circle of Joachim Vadianus, the leader of the Viennese Latin poetic circle in the second decade of the 16th century. Rabán Gerézdi has very well noticed that Márton Nagyszombati’s dedication to László Szalkay used Johann Kresling’s panegyric, dedicated to György Szathmáry and published in the same Viennese collection of orations in 1516, as a source,⁴⁰ while other parts originated from the dedication of Stephanus Taurinus’ epic *Stauromachia* (1519) – what is more, he even borrowed a number of hemistichs and verses from this epic poem about the peasant war.⁴¹

These two borrowings clearly show the sources and character of Nagyszombati’s acquaintance with Humanism. During his studies in Vienna, he must have

37 GERÉZDI, Rabán: A “régi dicsőség” Jagelló-kori énekese (Nagyszombati Márton) [The Praiser of the “Ancient Glory” in the Jagiellonian Age (Márton Nagyszombati)]. In: *Irodalomtörténeti Közlemények* 62 (1958), 119–138, here 123. The poem is available in a modern edition: NAGYSZOMBATI (cf. n. 2).

38 KULBER, Christoph: *Orationes Viennae Austriae ad Divum Maximilianum Caes. [...] aliosque Principes habitae*. Vienna 1516, F2–G3. – RITOÓKNÉ SZALAY (cf. n. 25), 180–186.

39 GERÉZDI (cf. n. 37), 121.

40 KULBER (cf. n. 38), O2b–O4b.

41 GERÉZDI (cf. n. 37), 125. For Taurinus’ poem, see TAURINUS, Stephanus: *Stauromachia id est Cruciatorium servile bellum*. Ed. by Ladislaus JUHÁSZ. Budapest 1944. The most comprehensive study is KOVÁCS, Sándor V.: A Dózsa-háború humanista eposza [The humanist epic of the Dózsa peasant war]. In: *Irodalomtörténeti Közlemények* 63 (1959), 451–473 and SZÖRÉNYI, László: L’influenza della Farsaglia di Lucano sull’epopea tardoumanista latina in Ungheria. Stephanus Taurinus: *Stauromachia*. In: *Neohelicon* 27 (2000), 97–111. See also BABINGER, Franz: Der mährische Humanist Stephan Taurinus und sein Kreis. In: *Südost-Forschungen* 9 (1954), 62–93 and WÖRSTER, Peter: *Humanismus in Olmütz. Landesbeschreibung, Stadttlob und Geschichtsschreibung in der ersten Hälfte des 16. Jahrhunderts*. Marburg 1994, 101–103, 143 f.

become familiar with the publications of Humanists centred around Vadianus (Camers, Collimitius-Tanstetter, Cuspinianus, Adrian Wolfard), who almost single-handedly produced the large number of publications leaving the Viennese press of Singrenius and Vietor each year, which included editions of ancient authors (Salust, Cicero, Persius, Claudianus, and even a Petronius in 1517, dedicated to István Werbőczy) as well as their own writings. If Márton had any time left in Vienna, apart from his studies in canon law, he could have attended the lectures of poetics by Vadianus at the University of Vienna. Taurinus, in turn, must have known these, as he chose Lucanus as the example to follow for his *Stauromachia* – just as Vadianus says in his *Poetics*, based on his lectures and published in 1518, some hold Lucanus at the highest esteem these days, and they say that “Lucanus hid more art into his poems than Virgil, and he could reach higher levels while resorting to less imitation, as Virgil had achieved something commonplace by openly imitating Homer, while Lucanus invented everything on his own in his topic of civil war”. It was also according to the advice of Vadianus that Taurinus explicitly imitated a single author that he had chosen as the most important one, because – as the former put it – especially in a young age, a huge variety of readings confuses the mind, and it is best to choose one author based on the judgement of the educated ones, and imitate that one.⁴² Márton Nagyszombati also used hemistichs and well-known gnomes by Lucanus in his poem, but it would be hard to say whether he did so because of his own readings or simply by imitating the poems of Taurinus.

Another characteristic of his poetry also refers to his accurate acquaintance with rhetorics, using the same basis as Taurinus: and that is his *linguistic exuberance*, the *abundant style*. The poem, divided into three parts, is hard to interpret as an integrated composition: the second canto presents the ancient glory of the Hungarians (*prisca nobilitas*), while in the first and third canto smaller elements, such as the descriptions of Golden Age, the accounts on the cruelty of the Turks, the immorality of the nobility and the exhortation of their moral reformation, follow each other again and again, in shorter (20–30 verses) or longer (100–150 verses) units that often are closed by an elliptic topos (*aposiopesis*). These elements say nothing new compared to the prior ones, only retell the same thing with different words. This is the point of the rhetoric technique called abundance (*copia*) by Erasmus and expansion (*amplificatio*) by others, that became popular especially after the publication of Erasmus’ most important theoretical-practical work on rhetorics, *The Abundance of Words and Things* (*De copia verborum et rerum*, 1512).⁴³ This theory is an “aesthetic of abundance, grounded in an eclectic imitation theory”: its main point is that the author should have the largest possible linguistic and theoretical material at his disposal while writing, both in the spheres of *inventio* and *elocutio*.⁴⁴ The goal is to lead the reader to a new and different kind of experience

42 VADIANUS, Joachim: *De poetica et carminis ratione*. Vol. I–III. Ed. by Peter SCHÄFFER. München 1973–1977.

43 ROTERODAMUS, Erasmus: *Opera omnia Desiderii Erasmi Roterodami*. Vol. I/6. *De copia verborum ac rerum*. Ed. by Betty E. KNOTT. Amsterdam 1988.

44 CAVE, Terence: *The Cornucopian Text: Problems of Writing in the French Renaissance*. Oxford 1979, 27.

through the detailed and abundant descriptions: as if things would not be described, rather painted, and as if the reader would be seeing the object, rather than reading about it. The creation of this experience can be called *enargeia*, the elucidation of the object from various angles.

One possibility to reach *enargeia* is to say the same thing with different words again: this is the abundance of words (*verba*). Erasmus cites two examples: for the sentence “I received your letter with great joy” he lists 200, while for the one “I will not forget you as long as I live”, 250 variations with different words. The other possibility is to utilise the abundance of the things (*res*), and this is the topic of the second book of Erasmus’ work. Here his example shows how the sentence “He lost all his wealth due to debauchery” can be extended to several pages though giving details about what the wealth consisted of (inheritance, realty, personalty, money etc.), how exactly the debauchery was manifested (playing cards or dice, feasting, drinking through the night etc.) and how the wealth was lost (to the last penny, there is no roof above his head now, even his sons will be obliged to pay his debts etc.).

These two types of abundance provide the basis for the poetry of Márton Nagyszombati. Let us see an example: the thesis statement is that the Turk is good-for-nothing and gains his victories through deceit. This, in several variations, can fill ten lines: the Turk is worth nothing in a battle; he cannot use weapons and can only rely on his good horse – it is only his deceptiveness that makes him strong; being a rascal, he does not dare to stand fight against a strong spirit; only his name is great in battles, but he has never won a victory through his martial virtues, only through deceit (III, 618–626). This, clearly, is the abundance of words, because it is only one thought which is being repeated in various forms, using the Erasmian method of variation (*variandi ratio*). The abundance of things is a different matter: there is a need for details there, often by using the *pars pro toto* principle. The ancient Hungarians were of an outstanding virtue, which is proved by a variety of things: “They did not lose their minds because of pomp and lascivious pleasures, / pure wine and the meals of dazzling tables, frivolous sinful ambition, covetous gasping for money, / and because of languished dreams on the bed at exuberant feasts,” and so on, and so forth, extended to the length of fifty verses (II, 39–94). This part of the poem sometimes makes the impression of reading the negation of the above seen Erasmian thesis sentence of “losing all his wealth due to debauchery”. Similarly spectacular is the description of the fear ruling the country after the peasant war and the loss of Belgrade, with the help of the abundance of things: the old and young tremble with fear, the shepherd does not dare to graze his flock, the peasant is afraid to go and plough, reap and harvest (III, 263–280).

This technique is consciously used by Nagyszombati, which is clear from the parts where the abundance of words and things closely follow each other in his poem. At the end of the third canto, he emphasises the importance of unity (*concordia*) and friendship (*amicitia*) to the Hungarian dignitaries (III, 529–570). “Preserve the existence of the nation unanimously,” he addresses the dignitaries, and then he repeats the same thought in seven other distiches, in eight versions, till verse 542. This is what Erasmus calls the abundance (*copia*) of words, as the same thing is expressed in another way. From verse 543, he starts a laudation of friendship, but

not through the abundance of words, rather that of things, as he describes its advantages in detail: friendship deflects the mind, makes everyone equal, rules cities, provides measures, helps the virtues, strengthens the soul etc. – enumerating a 25 fruits of friendship in thirteen distiches.

Naturally, Márton was neither the only, nor even the first user of the abundant style: it is found in the works of Taurinus, or even of Janus Pannonius. Erasmus was also not the first to teach it.⁴⁵ His teacher, whom he had also seen as an intellectual father, Rudolph Agricola (1444–1485) – one of the first Northern Humanists, and like Janus, a student of Guarino – also wrote a long work *About the Dialectic Invention* (*De inventione dialectica*). However, this remained unknown until the end of the 1530s, and its author approached the topic as a philosopher rather than a rhetor.⁴⁶ Contrary to this book, that of Erasmus was an entirely practical work, and its main goal – similarly to that of the *Adagia* (*Proverbs*, first edition: 1498) – was that the orator should make the impression of a richness of ideas and erudition befitting the situation in his works, dedications and epistles. Since the 1510s, the best available and best known handbook had been the *De copia rerum et verborum*; Joannes Pini-cianus' *Ex Promptuario vocabulorum variorum*, published in Vienna in 1521, gave a digest of Erasmus' work in its introduction. In 1523, it was a Hungarian philologist, Bálint Tornaaljai who participated in the first Central European edition of Erasmus' two most important works in the field of rhetoric, *De copia* and *De conscribendis epistolis*.⁴⁷ Erasmus' commentary on the Pseudo-Ovidian *Nux* (The Nut-Tree) was published in 1524: this work also served less scholarly reasons – instead, it rather attempted to serve as an example to teachers and students on how to analyse a poem from the perspective of rhetorics, with a special focus on the *amplificatio*, an ample tool for raising pathos.⁴⁸ Teachers of humanities in Vienna and Cracow had contacts with Erasmus: Rudolph Agricola Jr. (1490–1521) – who had no affinity to Rudolph Agricola Sr., but chose his name out of respect – taught in Cracow around 1515 and even met Taurinus once in Esztergom, where he was employed as a teacher in the court of Archbishop Tamás Bakócz.⁴⁹

It is also the result of the application of the Erasmian aesthetics of abundance that the tools of metaphor and similitude are almost entirely missing from Nagyszombati's poem: their place is taken by parables and references to Antique heroes. The long epic similitude is not entirely foreign from the genre of epideictic poems, such as panegyrics or exhortative poems: an example is offered by a piece by Janus Pannonius.⁵⁰ The mechanic and monotonous use of the method of amplification in the case of Abbot Márton is however well presented by the fact that he

45 On the relevance of rhetorical practices in schools, see JANKOVITS, László: *Accessus ad Janum*. Budapest 2002, 45–69.

46 JARDINE, Lisa: Erasmus, Man of Letters. Princeton/NJ 1993, 83–98 and 129–145.

47 GLOMSKI, Jacqueline: Erasmus and Cracow (1510–1530). In: Erasmus of Rotterdam Society Yearbook 17 (1997), 1–18, here 8–12.

48 CHOMARAT, Jacques: *Grammaire et rhétorique chez Érasme*. Paris 1981, I, 531–533.

49 FÖGEL, József: II. Ulászló udvartartása (1490–1515) [The Court of Vladislav II (1490–1515)]. Budapest 1913, 78. – BAUCH, Gustav: *Deutsche Scholaren in Krakau in der Zeit der Renaissance 1460 bis 1520*. Breslau 1901, 68 f.

50 Panegyric on Guarino Veronese. In: PANNONIUS (cf. n. 16), 339–348.

sometimes re-uses his own hemistichs and sentences once more in the same poem (some examples: II, 162 = II, 426; II, 314 = II, 398; II, 442 = III, 678; II, 530 = III, 208).

We also have to ask the question whether Erasmus had an impact on Márton Nagyszombati only through his rhetorical advice or also through his works on politics and ethics. Erasmus' works focusing, at least partly, on the Ottomans, such as the *Education of a Christian Prince* (1515), the *War* – which is a separate edition of the proverb “The war is sweet only for those who have never experienced it” from the *Adagia* – or *The Complaint of Peace* (1517) had a wide impact: the least one was published in sixteen editions within six years, until 1523; among them one in Cracow at the Vietor publishing house (1518). By this time, Erasmus was against the anti-Ottoman war, because only peace befits Christ: “If we want to convert the Turks to the Christian faith, we should behave as Christians first,” otherwise we shall decay and turn into Turks before we could baptise them. Nevertheless, it would be much better to convert them than to subdue and destroy them.⁵¹ The opinion of the famous Humanist had to be known by every political leader; however, following him could only be the luxury of a few, especially in Central Europe under the pressure of Ottoman troops (at the end of *The Complaint of Peace*, Erasmus dedicated his work only to the Pope and the Kings of Western Europe, and did not mention Sigismund, King of Poland, or Louis II). If Erasmus had read the work of Márton, who, after capturing the Turks, would have liked to have them slaughtered in a terrible bloodbath (III, 701–712), he would have most probably put the abbot into the category of those pseudo-priests who had mistaken the bishop's mitre for the soldier's helmet.⁵²

Nevertheless, if Erasmus' political opinion had not made an impact on Márton, his rhetoric could have done so – at least indirectly. The initial idea of *The Complaint* of Erasmus comes from the laws of nature: where does the struggle between humans and humans come from and what goal does it serve, when the world of animals is built upon love and friendship, and there is no other species than humans which would turn against themselves? Neither the cranes nor the sheep or elephants harm their own kind; the elements of the world do not struggle among themselves either. The same examples were borrowed by Ulrich von Hutten in his exhortation for an anti-Ottoman war to the German princes already in the next year, in 1518, but he turned the train of Erasmus' thought upside down, because he did not use it as an argument for a Christian philanthropy, but rather aimed at the conclusion that – just like the cranes, sheep and elephants – Germans should also unite under the rule of a single person, the Emperor.⁵³ The oration by Ricardo Bartolini, conceived for the

51 ROTERODAMUS, ERASMUS: Opera omnia Desiderii Erasmi Roterodami. Vol. IV/2: Querela Pacis. Ed. by O. HERDING. Amsterdam 1977, 93–96. – HAMPTON, Timothy: Erasmus, Rabelais and the Turkish Dogs. In: Representations 41 (1993), 58–82, here 61 f.

52 Among the methods recommended by Márton – *copia rerum* – we find poking out their eyes, cutting out their tongues, stoning them and hacking them with a sword. Cf. ROTERODAMUS (cf. n. 51), 82.

53 HUTTEN, Ulrich von: Ad Principes Germaniae ut bellum Turcis invehant. Augustae Vindelicorum 1518, D3r.

Imperial diet at Augsburg in 1518, also starts with the same idea, only in his case the examples for animals not harming their own kind are the snake, the lion and the tiger.⁵⁴ Erasmus' idea can also be found in the works of Valentinus Eck: in his poem *About the Benefits of Friendship and Concord* (*De amicitiae et concordiae utilitate*), addressed to Peter Zipser and Andreas Reuber, two burghers of Bartfeld from 1520, he writes that ever since the universe was formed from chaos, it is kept together by Concord, which leads the path of the stars, and renders the lion and wolf to live in peace – only humans attack humans. One can only trust his friend, as Theseus trusted Pirithous, Damon trusted Pytheas and Pollux did to Castor – the two burghers of Bartfeld are the same kinds of friends. The same example appears Márton's poem as well, this time applied to Hungarian nobles: every animal strives to keep peace with their own kind, even the bears, wolves and lions; the four elements also keep peace with each other, it is only the Hungarian nobles who cannot do the same (III, 445–452). Two of the three Antique pairs of friends mentioned by Eck also show an example to the Hungarian nobles in Márton Nagyszombati's piece (III, 575–582) after a long elaboration on the topic of friendship (*amicitia*), using the abundance of things method.

It is hard to decide whether in these cases one should identify the impact of Erasmus, von Hutten, Valentinus Eck or others on Márton, but it is probable that when writing his poem, he consulted similar, anti-Ottoman exhortative books. The *Türkenpüchlein*, published in German one year before the work of Márton Nagyszombati in Augsburg, bears evidence that the authors of these pamphlets and orations followed each other's work with attention: according to the story, a Hungarian, a Hermit, a Gipsy and a Turk meet by chance under Belgrade and they discuss the political situation in Europe. At the end of the piece, the Hermit provides an almost complete bibliography of contemporary anti-Ottoman orations and poems, claiming that these had been of no use.⁵⁵

Sadly, the poem does not tell much about the readings of Márton Nagyszombati. The impact of the *Stauromachia* of Taurinus was already mentioned. *Iuncturae*, well known idioms from Roman poetry appear in a variety of places, but the author uses historical or mythological examples very rarely: their number is only significant in the first part of his work.⁵⁶ Here he enumerates the severe punishments afflicted upon those who transgressed the prescriptions of *religio* in the Antiquity: he evokes the example of those Greek philosophers who were convicted because of their faithlessness (Socrates, Anaxagoras and Aristotle, who had to move into exile), and then brings forth two Roman cases, the burned scrolls of Numa Pompilius, and "Tullius", who was thrown into water for copying the ritual books of the priests. Both references are so cryptic and obscure that the events can only be

54 BARTOLINI, Ricardo: Oratio ad Imp. Caes. Maximilianum Aug. ac potent. Germaniarum Principes, de expeditione contra Turcas suscipienda, cum privilegio imperiali. Augsburg 1518, Aiiir-v.

55 PHILAETHES: Turcken puechlein. Ein nutzlich gesprech, oder underrede etlicher personen, zu besserung christlicher ordenung und lebens gedichtet. [...] Geendet im Merzten 1522, Diii. On the relevance of the work, see BOHNSTEDT (cf. n. 17), 10 f.

56 Which was not translated into Hungarian in the modern edition, although translation of Árpád Majtényi does not call the reader's attention on this omission, see I, 233–350.

understood from their original source, the *Memorable Deeds and Sayings* by Valerius Maximus. Right in the first book of this work, Valerius, the laconic soldier-writer refers to examples of how the Romans punished faithlessness (I, 1, 12–13), mentioning among them the writings found by the sarcophagus of Numa Pompilius and the throwing of Atilius (instead of Tullius!) into the water. Valerius Maximus was not an exceedingly popular author among the Humanists, and he was much more often quoted in ecclesiastical orations; in the Late Medieval speeches of Pelbárt Temesvári and Osvát Laskai, he was the only pagan author ever quoted apart from the Moralists: Cicero, Seneca and Aristotle. Abbot Márton's examples were obviously not provided by Italian Humanism, and he was not in the least touched by Platonism. He elaborated at a great length on the grandness of Aristotle whom he had studied at university (I, 247–266), calling him the leader of the wise men (*princeps Sophorum*), while he did not even mention the greatest discovery of the Florentine Humanism, Plato. The background of his erudition thus brings him close to monastic Humanism: in the laudatory verses about St. Ladislaus (II, 307–358), he compares the King to Antique rulers (Traianus, Numa Pompilius, Lycurgus), and the age of St. Adalbert and St. Gerard reminds him of that of Camillus. Paradoxically, even the story of St. Ursula and the 11.000 virgins (slaughtered by the Huns) contributes to the list of the virtues of the Hungarians' predecessors (II, 103–104), which shows that for Márton, national, classical and Christian history melts into an unproblematic unity in the rhetoric of anti-Ottoman exhortation. It is probably also another parallel to Erasmus, as the latter quotes the above mentioned chapter from Valerius Maximus in *The Complaint of Peace*: in his interpretation, war among Christians is a fratricide, which – according to Valerius – was punished by the Romans so that the murderer was sewn into a sack and thrown into the Tiber. Márton Nagyszombati, when discussing disrespect towards religion, quotes the same example that Erasmus uses when referring to Christians waging war against each other.⁵⁷

It could also be relevant for the identification of Márton Nagyszombati's sources that he mentions Podalirius, an eminent doctor from the *Iliad* (I, 133): in classical poetry, he was frequently recalled by Ovid,⁵⁸ which might indicate that Abbot Márton read his works. However, this doctor can be found in the poems of contemporaries as well: Bohuslav Hassenštejn a Lobkowitz says in his ironic epicidium upon the death of Matthias Corvinus that the king could not even have been cured by Podalirius.⁵⁹ Taking Bohuslav's works into account, the occurrence of Podalirius in Nagyszombati's work seems rather to be the result of rhetorical studies during his school-years. In the collection of Bohuslav's poems, there are several pieces which seem to be school exercises of elaborating upon a given topic, such as his works *About Spring* (*De Vere*), or about winter weather (*In tempus brumale*),⁶⁰ which nevertheless include hemistichs to be also found in Márton Nagyszombati's description of the Golden Age (e.g. I, 365–382). Márton's account of the luxury of

57 ROTERODAMUS (cf. n. 43), 84.

58 See Ovids *Tristia*.

59 HASSENSTEYNIUS A LOBKOWITZ (cf. n. 33), 91, Epic. 2, 2.

60 *Ibid.*, 211.

the nobles (III, 7–44) is very similar to Bohuslav's depiction of their debauchery,⁶¹ despite the fact that the genre of the satire offered much wider possibilities, and the latter even wrote in a much more original style than what Nagyszombati's exhortation could have achieved. The nobles do not talk about virtue, only about their perjuries and frauds, how they seduced each other's wives, and "what she said, when she was laid for the first time, and how many times he could do her in one night" (e.g. "quae dicta dedit, quo tempore primum / Venit in amplexus, quoties patrauerit una / nocte."). It is hard to decide whether Márton compares the wealth of King Matthias to that of Croesus (II, 520), just as Bohuslav did in the dialogue between Vladislav II and the goddess Fortuna,⁶² because of their similar poetic vocabulary or because he knew Bohuslav's poem. Also, it is possible that Bohuslav's image of King Matthias – first dominated by hatred, later by respect for his vigour and authority – is mirrored by Nagyszombati's description of Matthias' resoluteness, then already remembered with nostalgic feelings: he let the rebels be bound to pillars, put in chains, their teeth drawn out with clamps and their bodies flagellated (II, 549–554).⁶³

Finally, another extraordinary Antique historical parallel draws our attention to a third reading material of Nagyszombati: while exalting *concordia* – among a variety of other forms – he says, "Divided power unmakes even a great power, such as hot water turns into lukewarm when it is dispersed; ambitious faction [*discordia*] destroys in a short time what has been built through a long time's work. Thus admonished Micipsa his three sons before his death" (III, 463–467). The name and story of Micipsa comes from the 10th chapter of Sallust's work on *The Jugurthine War*: here we find the well-known sentence, quoted over and over again in anti-Ottoman Humanist orations: "For by concord even small states are increased, but by discord, even the greatest fall to nothing."⁶⁴ Márton could have easily read this work during his studies in its 1511 and 1516 Vienna editions.

Márton Nagyszombati follows the rules of the genre of exhortative poem in a mechanical way and with rather less poetic routine; however, the piece stands out from among its contemporaries because of its roots in personal experience. The author repeatedly recalls his own misery (II, 578; III, 786), and we have also mentioned the place where he elaborates upon the tortures he wishes to be inflicted upon the Turks – perhaps as a personal revenge. Even if we cannot agree Rabán Gerézdi, who claimed that the writing of Abbot Márton contained "more content and more

61 "Satyra in qua mores procerum nobilium et popularium Patriae suae reprehendit." Ibid., 11–18.

62 LOBKOWITZ VON HASSENSTEIN (cf. n. 30), 45 f.

63 Bohuslav tried to persuade King Wladislav, that a king has to be savage, because nobody obeys the just ones, and although Wladislav is willing to change his manners and become a tyrant, Goddess Fortune does not believe it because of his breeding. In the dialogue of Goddess Fortune and the King, he says: "[Wlad.:] Quid faciam? Iubeo, sed nemo recta iubenti / paret. [Fort.:] Mathiae paruit omnis homo. / [Wlad.:] Saevus erat. [Fort.:] Saevus nobis dominetur oportet, / cervicis durae nempe caterva sumus. / [Wlad.:] Mutabo mores ergo fiamque tyrannus. / [Fort.:] Et Laudeo et moneo, credere sed nequeo. / [Wlad.:] Cur, quaeso? [Fort.:] Quoniam in teneris consuescere multum. / [Wlad.:] Regius, ut video, est ense tuendus honor." See *ibid.*, 46.

64 SALLUST: Sallust's Conspiracy of Catiline and The Jugurthine War. Transl. by John Selby WATSON. Teddington 2006.

inner truth” than those of the average contemporary Humanists, we can safely say that – contrary to those – it contains at least some hints about the author’s own personal emotions.